THOMPSON-OKANAGAN REGION
PARK OPERATIONS BRANCH
PARKS & OUTDOOR RECREATION DIVISION
MINISTRY OF LANDS, PARKS & HOUSING
KAMLOOPS, B.C.

BEAR CREEK DELTA
CONCEPT PLAN

MARCH, 1980

105-04524/

Mr. C. J. Velay,
Director,
Operations Branch.

The Bear Creek Delta Concept Plan has been prepared by Mr. J. Meeson and is recommended to you for transmittal to Mr. Gray for Executive Committee approval.

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Acting Regional Director.

Recommended:

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Approved:

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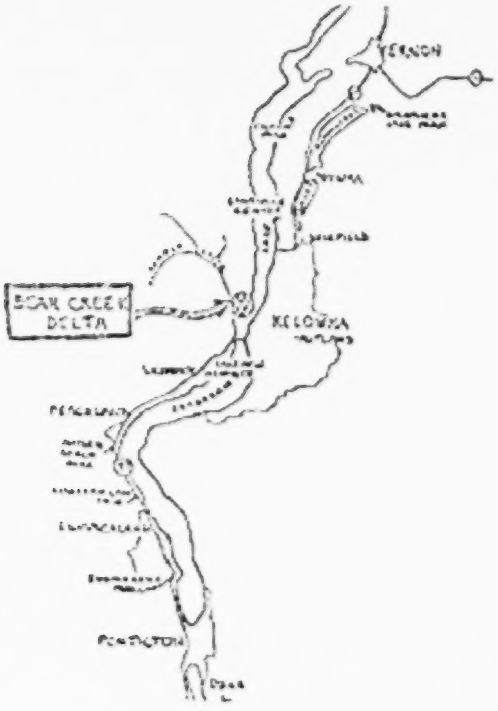
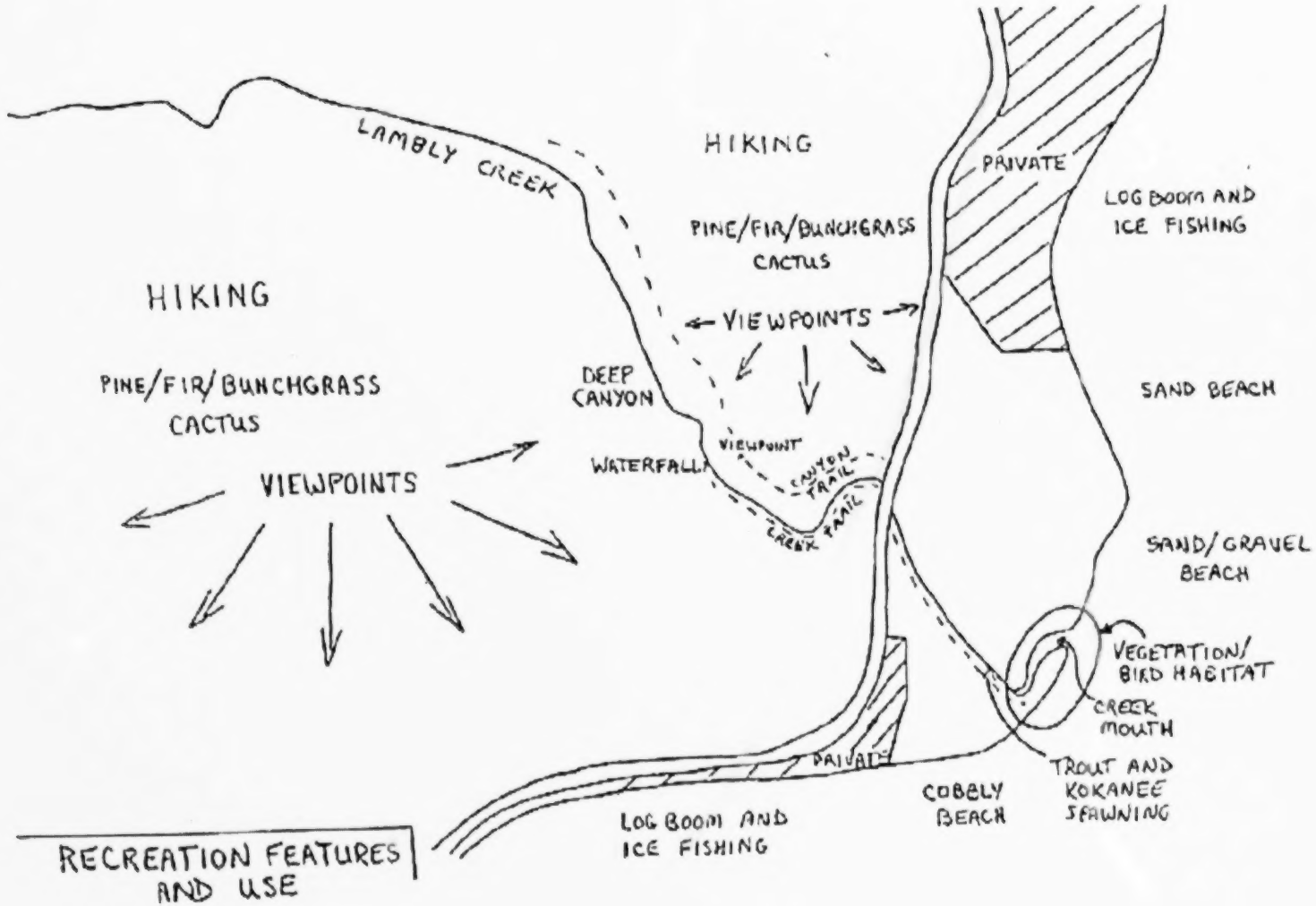
INTRODUCTION

Located on the west side of Okanagan Lake, Bear (Lambly) Creek Delta is only 10 km from Kelowna and 6 km from Highway 97 via paved road. Presently undeveloped, the property contains about 35 acres of delta with about 600 metres of Okanagan Lake shoreline. The remaining land consists of steeply rising slopes, split by a deep canyon, with some flat areas on top.

The site offers a blend of intensive and dispersed recreation opportunities. The delta can provide lake and creek side camping opportunities. The lakefront's sand, gravel and cobble beaches and extensive backshore is well suited for picnicking, swimming and beach-oriented activities. Year-round fishing occurs in the adjacent bays. Lambly creek flows through a deep canyon, over a waterfall and across the delta, providing a range of geological, floral and faunal features for nature study and interpretation, including trout and Kokanee spawning in it's lower reaches. The upland, typical of the Okanagan, i.e. steep rising slopes with flat open benches, is a large, undisturbed area of open Ponderosa Pine/Douglas Fir/ Bunchgrass community with Prickly Pear cactus on the more exposed, rocky slopes. This upland provides excellent opportunities for hiking with expansive views of the lake and canyon. It also has suitable terrain for group picnicking and camping.

The proximity of the lake and upland features add significantly to their value for recreation purposes. Campers and day-users situated in the delta area can easily walk to nearby features, such as the waterfall, or to the viewpoints, greatly enhancing the enjoyment of their visit.




LAMBLY CREEK
HIKING
PINE/FIR/BUNCHGRASS
CACTUS
VIEWPOINTS
HIKING
PINE/FIR/BUNCHGRASS
CACTUS
VIEWPOINTS
DEEP
CANYON
WATERFALL
VIEWPOINT
CANYON TRAIL
CREEK TRAIL
PRIVATE
LOG BOOM AND
ICE FISHING
SAND BEACH
SAND/GRAVEL
BEACH
VEGETATION/
BIRD HABITAT
CREEK
MOUTH
TROUT AND
KOKANEE
SPAWNING
COBBLY
BEACH
LOG BOOM AND
ICE FISHING
RECREATION FEATURES
AND USE

REGIONAL ANALYSIS

The regional role of Provincial Parks in the Okanagan valley bottom is to provide residents and tourists a variety of highly accessible , lake-oriented recreation opportunities evenly distributed throughout the valley. Regarding the Central Valley (Kelowna) area, the objective is to provide day-use beach access and destination campsites. [1]

Compared to other part s of the Okanagan, the Kelowna area has far fewer privately or publicly provided camping opportunities. (see Table 1) In fact at the present time, Provincial Parks do not provide any developed, camping opportunities in the greater Kelowna region. The nearest provincial campgrounds are at Okanagan Lake Park, 32 km to the south and Ellison Park, 68 km north of Kelowna.

The present supply of privately operated camping opportunities in the Kelowna area is limited and used to capacity during the summer. Private operators provide about 500 campsites within one-half hour drive of Kelowna. Occupancy is usually at or near 100% during the mid-June to late August period.

Kelowna has far less public beach frontage than other Okanagan centres. (see Table 2).

The Parks & Outdoor Recreation Division does not provide any intensive, vehicle access lake-oriented, day-use opportunities in the Kelowna area. A very small beach area, Antlers Beach, is provided south of Peachland, about 27 km from Kelowna. The nearest day-use facility provided by the province is Sun-Oka Beach Park, south of Summerland, 51 km from Kelowna.

The Kelowna area supply of beach-oriented, day-use recreation opportunities provided by the Central Okanagan Regional District and Municipality of Kelowna, consists of about 14 parks that are used to capacity at peak times during the summer.

TABLE 1 - CAMPSITES IN THE OKANAGAN

Region	Private Sector	Provincial Parks
Oliver - Osoyoos	1086	43
Penticton	1920	185
Kelowna	665	--
Vernon	825	54

TABLE 2 - PUBLIC BEACH FRONTAGE IN THE OKANAGAN

Region	Miles	Population
Oliver - Osoyoos	2.2 (12.9%)	6.5%
Penticton	6.0 (35.1%)	21.6%
Kelowna	4.5 (26.3%)	46.4%
Vernon	4.4 (25.7%)	25.5%

(Excludes Okanagan Mountain Park and Bear Creek Delta)

(1) Draft Role Plan – Okanagan. Thompson-Okanagan Region, Parks & Outdoor Recreation Division, 1979

PROJECTED DEMAND AND SUPPLY

The Kelowna region's population and economy is projected to continue it's rapid growth into the 1980's and tourism will be one of the main areas of growth in the economy. Increased demand for day-use and over-night recreation facilities by local residents and tourists will place severe pressure on existing facilities, particularly in areas of very high growth such as Westbank – Lakeview Heights.

The potential to increase the supply of lake-oriented day-use recreation opportunities by developing the potential of existing parks or by establishing more new parks is severely limited. The growth of both public and private camping opportunities cannot be expected to keep pace with demand.

Development of Bear Creek could create a destination offering day-use and overnight opportunities different from that found anywhere in the Kelowna region; opportunities for lakeside camping or beach activities with easy foot access to nearby features, such as a waterfall and a canyon, and spectacular views of Okanagan Lake. This will increase tourism in the region, to the benefit of private campground operators and other business, and give local residents, particularly on the city's west side, additional lake-oriented opportunities.

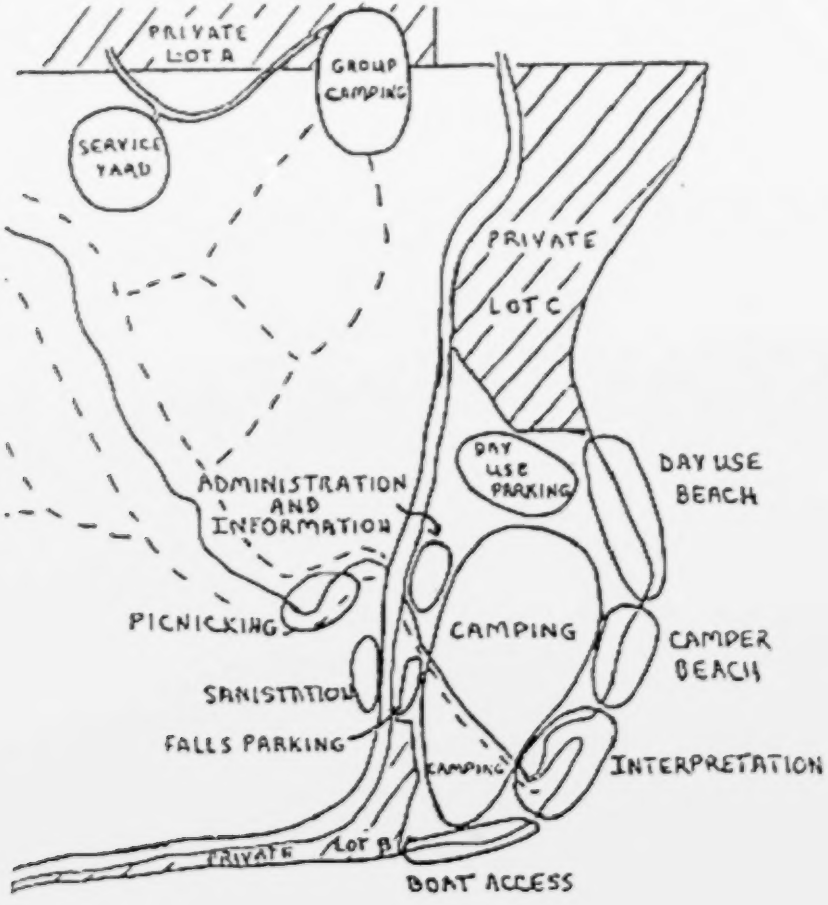
TABLE 3
POPULATION GROWTH

	Growth 1971 - 76	Projected Growth 1976 – 81	1981 - 86
Kelowna	30%	19.7%	16%
Area A Winfield Oyama Okanagan Centre	46.8%	40.0%	27.1%
Area G Lakeview Heights	121.6%	37.3%	27.0%
Area H Westbank	165.9%	33.3%	28.0%
Central Okanagan Regional District	42.0%	24.0%	19.0%

Source: Canada Census and Regional District

CONCEPT

Bear Creek will be developed and managed to provide a mix of destination, lakefront, family recreation opportunities for day and overnight use by tourists and local residents. Maximum recreational use will be made of the delta for such activities as vehicle access camping, picnicking, swimming and other beach-oriented activities. The creek and its mouth area will be conserved for interpretation, nature study and fish spawning purposes. The steeper upland will remain largely undeveloped offering opportunities for hiking, viewing, nature study, interpretation and group camping and picnicking.



ACCOMMODATION

Vehicle access camping opportunities will be provided for a total of approximately 100 parties on the north and south sides of the creek. Development will incorporate standard single and double campsites in a high density camping layout, 50' average campsite spacing, combined with large open, grassed areas which allow all campers a lakeside camping experience, free access to the lakeshore, and provide play and socializing areas. (see preliminary sketch map) Campsites will be kept near grade. Campers occupying campsites fronting on the open areas will be permitted to tent on the edge of the grass. Vehicle use on roads will be controlled by ditch. Ditch and barriers will be used to control vehicles in the campsites. Low growing shrubs and trees will provide visual separation of campsites. Centralized services will be established including garbage, wood, water and toilet facilities. Flush toilets will be provided and extensive landscaping will be required. Playground(s) will be provided in close association with the open area(s).

DAY-USE

The shoreline of the north portion of the delta will be upgraded and facilities provided for both day users and campers. The sand beach will be broadened and opened up and grass established. Buoys will be placed offshore for swimming. Following removal of the unloading dock, offshore contours will be restored in this area.

Large open, grassed areas will be provided in the immediate backshore area which will be linked by trail to the campground open areas.

Parking will be provided for 200 vehicles at the north edge of the delta. Facilities will include change-houses, flush toilets, water, picnic tables and fireplaces.

Future expansion of day-use will be dependent on acquisition of the land on the north side of the day-use area.

GROUPSITE

Opportunities for day and overnight group activities by organized groups will be provided in the upper portion of the park. Facilities will include vehicle access leading from the service area road, camping opportunities for 100 people, water, a picnic shelter, an open grassed area, and a fire circle. Land required, part of Lot A, must be acquired from Crown Zellerbach. Efforts will be made to arrange a suitable land trade with the owner.

BOATING

Boat access will be restricted to the south side of the delta. No provision will be made for boat launching at this time. North shore beaches will provide protected swimming areas.

TRAILS

A trail system will provide access along the creek from the mouth to the waterfall and beyond if possible, at river level and connect the delta and group facilities to viewpoints and features along the canyon rim and throughout the upper portion of the park. In addition, connecting trails and bridges in the lower creek and mouth area will allow easy access to all feature and facilities in the delta.

Parking for 10 vehicles, toilets and an information board for the west side trails will be provided off the entrance road. The parking lot will be designed to permit expansion to 25 vehicle capacity if required.

ADMINISTRATION AND SERVICE AREA

A gatehouse will be located on the north side of the creek to control access to the campground and day-use parking lot. Provision will be made for a small office and storage in the gatehouse building or in a small service building nearby. Parking for the public and staff will be provided nearby.

A small service area will be located near Lot A in the upper portion of the park with access off the mainline logging road.

Berms and fencing will be constructed on the boundary of Lots B and C to reduce the visual disturbance, noise and trespass on adjacent lands. Construction of the berms and fencing and the landscaping will be done in such a way to reduce the intrusiveness of the structures. The main parking entrance will also provide access to Lot B on the south side of the delta.

A fence will be constructed along the western edge of the delta adjacent to the Westside road. Gates will be established at the entrance and near the bridge to control vehicle access.

INTERPRETATION

Provision will be made for an amphitheatre in the creek mouth area on the south side of the creek. In the interim, interpretive programs may be operated from a playground. Self-interpreting facilities will be developed to include signs, trail guides and pamphlets according to a park interpretive plan which will be prepared.

INFORMATION

Information about the park and other matters will be provided at a number of locations. The main information board for the park will be established near the gatehouse. Information explaining the role of Crown Zellerbach in the creation of the park and the presence of log booms and ties along the shore will be provided in the day-use area. The park boundary in the area of the log booms on the north and south sides of the delta will be signed to indicate that the public is not permitted to use the booms.

SANI-STATION

A sani-station will be established in the area opposite the park entrance.

PHASING

Phase I

The entire north side camping area will be landscaped and the irrigation and water systems will be installed. Access will be developed to the north side of the delta and the campground loops will be completed as funds permit.

The service area and the administration centre will be available for use when camping begins. The gatehouse will be installed when required.

The north and south side berms will be constructed.

The day use parking lot will be partially completed and toilets and information board installed. The beach areas near the log booms will be signed. The area will be operable.

The water and irrigation systems will be installed and the landscaping established in the south side camping area.

Phase II

The day-use and campers beaches will be landscaped and facilities installed. The day use parking lot will be completed.

The falls parking for 10 vehicles will be constructed along with information and toilets. The creek and canyon trails will be established.

The south side camping will be developed along with the sanistation.

The amphitheatre and upland trails will be established.

Upon acquisition of the required land, the group site will be developed.